

## INTRODUCTION

The study area is located in southern Elmore County, southwestern Idaho, and includes Mountain Home Air Force Base located approximately 10 mi southwest of the city of Mountain Home. Chemical analyses have been made periodically since the late 1940's on water samples from supply wells on the Air Force Base. These analyses indicate increases in specific conductance and in concentrations of nitrogen compounds, chloride, and sulfate. The purposes of this report, which was prepared in cooperation with the Department of the Air Force, are to describe the seasonal changes in water quality and water levels and to depict the directions of ground-water movement in the regional ground-water system and perched-water zones. Much data presented in this report are from both the regional ground-water system and perched-water zones, the focus is on the regional system. A previous study by the U.S. Geological Survey (Parlaman and Young, 1990) describes the areal changes in water quality and water levels during the fall of 1989.

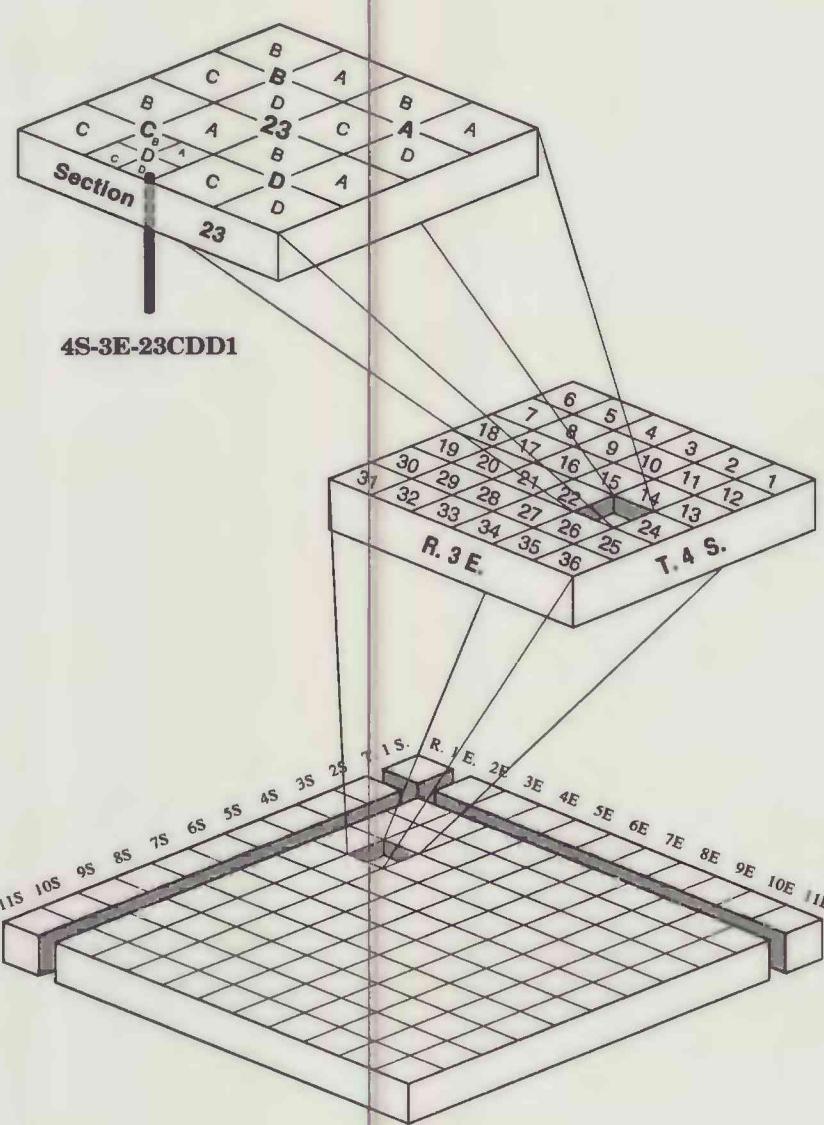
During March, July, and October 1990, 141 wells were inventoried and depth to water was measured. Continuous water-level recorders were installed on 5 of the wells and monthly measurements of depth to water were made in 17 of the wells during March 1990 through February 1991 (map at right). Water samples from 33 wells and 1 spring were collected during the spring and fall of 1990 for chemical analyses. Samples also were collected monthly from 11 of those wells during April to September 1990 (table 1).

Selected well-construction and water-use data and measurements of depth to water for 141 wells are given in table 2 (separate sheets in envelope). Directions of ground-water movement and selected hydrographs showing seasonal fluctuations of water levels in the regional ground-water system and perched-water zones are shown on sheet 2. Changes in water levels in the regional ground-water system during March to October 1990 are shown on sheet 2.

## WELL- AND SPRING-NUMBERING SYSTEM

The well- and spring-numbering system (diagram below) used by the U.S. Geological Survey in Idaho indicates the location of wells and springs within the official rectangular subdivision of public lands with reference to the Boise base line and Meridian. The first two elements of the number designate the section (1/4 mile) or south and range (east or west). The next two segments of the section number are letters, which indicate the 1/4 section (160-acre tract), 1/4-1/4 section (40-acre tract), 1/4-1/4-1/4 section (10-acre tract), and 1/4-1/4-1/4-1/4 section (2 1/2-acre tract); the final number of the well within the tract.

Quarter sections are designated by the letters A, B, C, and D in counterclockwise order from the northeast quarter of each section. Forty-acre, 10-acre, and 2 1/2-acre tracts within each quarter section are lettered in the same manner. Well 4S-SE-23CDD1, for example, is in the SE1/4SE1/4SW1/4 sec. 23, T. 4 S., R. 3 E., and is the first well inventoried in that tract. Springs are designated by the letter "S" following the last numeral; for example, 4S-SE-35DC1A1.



## CONVERSION FACTORS, VERTICAL DATUM, AND ABBREVIATED WATER-QUALITY UNITS

Multiply By To obtain

acre 4,047 square meter  
foot (R) 0.3048 meter  
mile (mi) 1.609 kilometer

Temperatures in °C (degrees Celsius) can be converted to °F (degrees Fahrenheit) as follows:

$$^{\circ}\text{F} = (1.8)^{\circ}\text{C} + 32$$

All water temperatures are reported to the nearest 0.5°C.

**Sea level:** In this report, "sea level" refers to the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 (NGVD of 1929)—a geodetic datum derived from a general adjustment of the first-order level nets of the United States and Canada, formerly called Sea Level Datum of 1929.

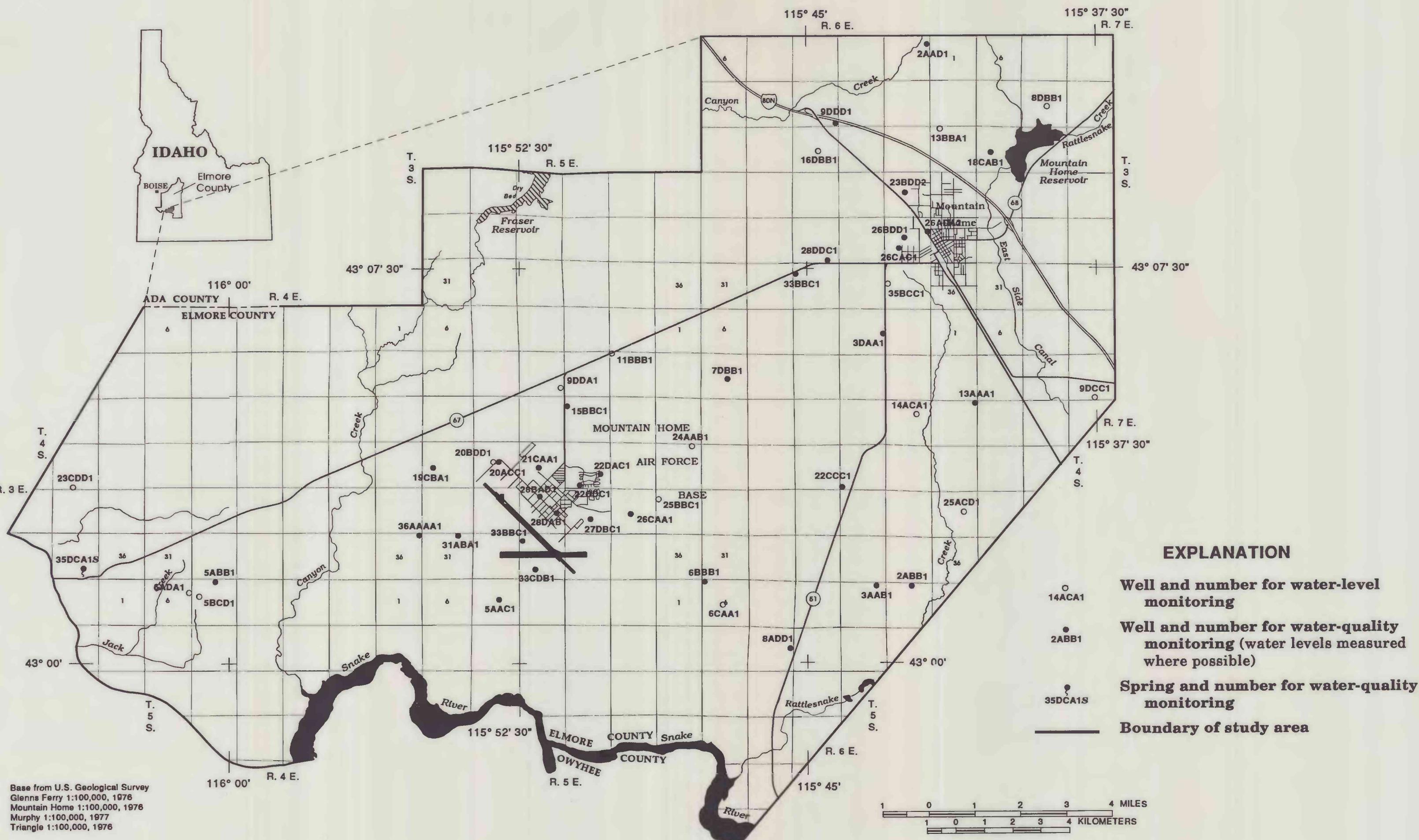
**Abbreviated water-quality units used in report:**

µg/L micrograms per liter  
µS/cm microsiemens per centimeter at 25°C  
mg/L milligrams per liter

## Acknowledgments

The authors are grateful to the many landowners in the study area who allowed access to their property, supplied information and permitted measurements to be made in their wells and springs. Special thanks are given to M.P. Schreder, B.F. Connor, M.C. Koval, and M.W. Sandstrom, U.S. Geological Survey Laboratory, for their technical expertise and for their analyses of volatile organics.

## LOCATIONS OF WELLS AND SPRING IN GROUND-WATER-MONITORING NETWORK



## EXPLANATION

Well and number for water-level monitoring

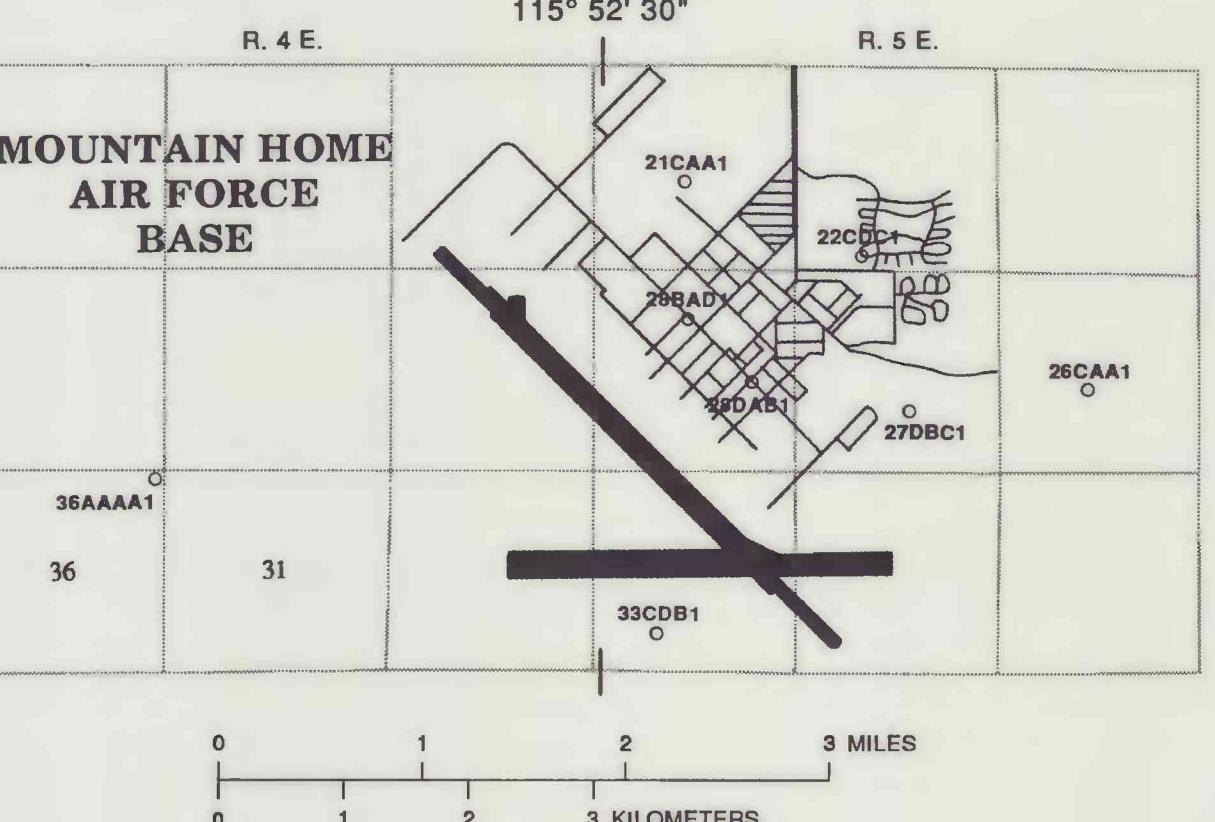
Well and number for water-quality monitoring (water levels measured where possible)

Spring and number for water-quality monitoring

Boundary of study area

## Sampling Methodology and Quality Assurance, Sample Custody, and Documentation Procedures

Methods used for onsite water-quality determinations and collection and preservation of water samples for inorganic compound analyses are described in publications by the U.S. Geological Survey (1977); the Hach Company (1988); and Pritt and Jones (1990). Methods and quality assurance procedures used for collection and preservation of water samples for volatile organic compound analyses were established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (1989a, 1989b, 1989c, 1989d). Procedures followed for sample custody and documentation were provided by Ray R. Jones (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, written commun., 1989). The U.S. Geological Survey National Water-Quality Laboratory is certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region VII, for all Safe Drinking Water Act contaminant analyses (M.J. Fishman, U.S. Geological Survey, written commun., 1989).

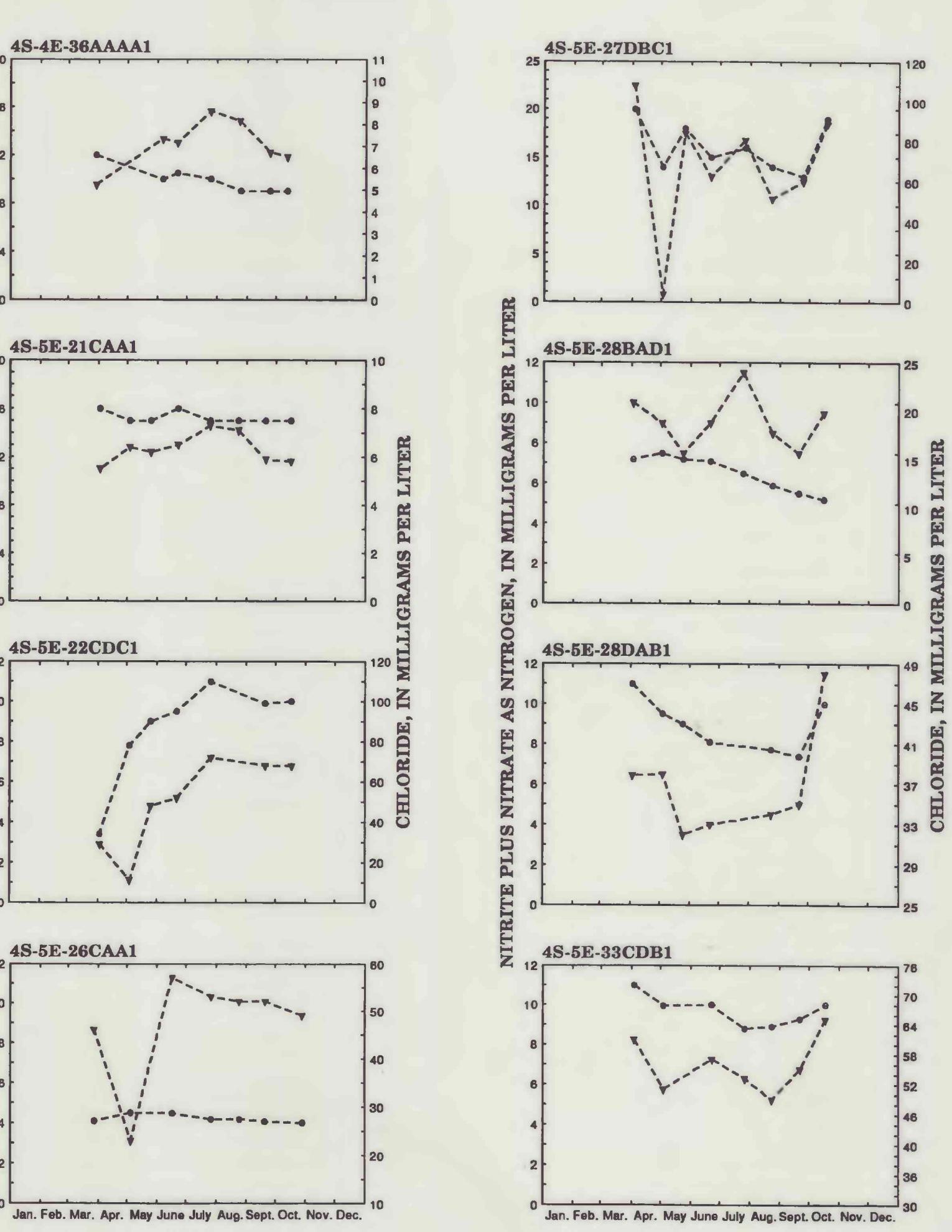


## LOCATIONS OF WELLS FOR WHICH GRAPHS OF SEASONAL CHANGES IN NITRITE PLUS NITRATE AS NITROGEN AND CHLORIDE ARE SHOWN BELOW

### EXPLANATION

▼ Nitrite plus nitrate as nitrogen

• Chloride



## SEASONAL CHANGES

Seasonal changes in nitrite plus nitrate as nitrogen and chloride in the regional ground-water system for selected wells are shown in the graphs above. These graphs indicate three types of seasonal changes in the concentrations of nitrogen and chloride: (1) Wells 4S-4E-27DBC1, 4S-5E-28DAB1, and 4S-5E-33CDB1 show concentrations that decrease in response to the start of ground-water pumping for irrigation, and are generally increasing at the end of the irrigation season; (2) 4S-5E-22CDC1 shows concentrations that increase in response to the start of ground-water pumping for irrigation, reach a peak during the irrigation season, then gradually decrease at the end of the season; and (3) wells 4S-4E-36AAA1, 4S-5E-21CAA1, 4S-5E-26CAA1, and 4S-5E-28DAB1 show concentrations that generally remain constant and fluctuate only slightly in response to ground-water pumping for irrigation. The reason for the large change in the concentrations of chloride from April to May in water from wells 4S-5E-22CDC1, 4S-5E-26CAA1, and 4S-5E-27DBC1 is unknown.

Minor seasonal changes in volatile organic compounds, including dichloromethane, bromoform, chlorodibromomethane, and trichloroethylene, were observed in water from wells 4S-5E-22CDC1, 4S-5E-27DBC1, 4S-5E-28DAB1, 4S-5E-33CDB1, 27DBC1, 28DAB1, 28DAB1, 31CAA1, and 33CDB1. Four of these wells are included in the above graphs. Generally, the seasonal changes in concentrations of nitrogen and chloride were the same as seasonal changes in concentrations of volatile organic compounds.